

“his head and body, and became a fearful t̄dong s̄lah, or hooded snake, the girth of which was that of a cocoanut tree, whose tongue was lolling out and whose eyes were large as cymbals. The people amazed dispersed, and a few daring persons remained and beat the snakes. Then again they assembled in greater numbers, with loud shouts and noise, to destroy the snake. *The latter pursued the Raja, who sought for shelter behind a tree.*”

A MALAY KRAMAT.

The mining district of Larut in Perak is so essentially a Chinese settlement that its early Malay history is generally completely lost sight of. Before the discovery of tin in Larut, some thirty or forty years ago, Trong, which is further south, was the port from which traders and merchandise found their way to Parit Gantang and Kwala Kangsa. It is still a thriving district and likely to increase in importance, but it has been eclipsed for many years by Larut. The old plantations of fruit trees at Trong mark it at once as a much older settlement than Larut, where cultivation is in its infancy. Trees are among the few traces which the Malay leaves of his occupation; he does not build stone walls and seldom erects permanent monuments of any kind. Ancient groves of durian trees, planted no one can say when or by whom, may sometimes shew where a populous *Kampong* must at one time have been established; but in all other respects a deserted Malay settlement became undistinguishable jungle in a very few years.

Local tradition in Perak has handed down various stories connected with Achinese invasions of Perak, which must have taken place in the 16th and 17th centuries, and there is little doubt of the truth of the popular account which makes the coast settlements, now called Larut and Trong, the scene of some of the encounters between the invaders and the people of the country. For a long time Perak was a mere dependency of Acheen, and it may be fairly supposed that some of the conquerors settled in the former country.

Rightly or wrongly the Malays of Larut assign an Achinese origin to an old grave which was discovered in the forest some years ago, and of which I propose to give a brief description. It is situated about half-way between the Larut Residency and the mining village of Kamunting. In the neighbourhood the old durian trees of Java betoken the pre-

sence of a Malay population at a date long prior to the advent of the Chinese miner. The grave was discovered about twenty years ago by workmen employed by the Mēntri of Perak to make the Kamunting road, and it excited much curiosity among the Malays at the time. The Mēntri and all the ladies of his family went on elephants to see it and it has been an object of much popular prestige ever since.

The Malays of Java were able from village tradition to give the name and sex of the occupant of this lonely tomb, "Toh Bidan Susu Lanjut," whose name sounds better in the original than in an English translation. She is said to have been an old Achinese woman of good family; of her personal history nothing is known, but her claims to respectability are evinced by the carved head and foot stones of Achinese workmanship, which adorn her grave, and her sanctity is proved by the fact that the stones are eight feet apart. It is a well-known Malay superstition that the stones placed to mark the graves of Saints miraculously increase their relative distance during the lapse of years, and thus bear mute testimony to the holiness of the person whose resting-place they mark.

The *Kramat* on the Kamunting road is on the spur of a hill through which the roadway is cut. A tree overshadows the grave and is hung with strips of white cloth and other rags (*panji panji*) which the devout have put there. The direction of the grave is as nearly as possible due north and south. The stones at its head and foot are of the same size, and in every respect identical one with the other. They are of sandstone, and are said by the natives to have been brought from Achin. In design and execution they are superior to ordinary Malay art; as will be seen, I think, on reference to the rubbings of the carved surface of one of them, which have been executed for me by the Larut Survey Office, and which I have transmitted to the Society with this paper. The extreme measurements of the stones (furnished from the same source) are 2' 1" \times 0' 9" \times 0' 7". They are in excellent preservation and the carving is fresh and sharp. Some Malays profess to discover in the three rows of vertical direction on the broadest face of the slabs the Mohamedan attestation of the unity of God لا اله الا الله (*La ilaha illa-lla*) repeated over and over again; but I confess that I have been unable to do so. The offerings at a *Kramat* are generally incense (*istanji* or *satangi*) or

benzoin (*kaminian*); these are burned in little stands made of bamboo rods; one end is stuck in the ground and the other split into four or five, and then opened out and plaited with basket work, so as to hold a little earth. They are called *sangka*; a Malay will often vow that if he succeeds in some particular project, or gets out of some difficulty in which he may happen to be placed, he will burn three or more *sangka* at such and such a *Kramat*. Persons who visit a *Kramat* in times of distress or difficulty, to pray and to vow offerings, in case their prayers are granted, usually leave behind them as tokens of their vows small pieces of white cloth, which are tied to the branches of a tree or to sticks planted in the ground near the sacred spot.

For votary purposes the long-forgotten tomb of Toh Bidan Susu Laujut enjoys considerable popularity among the Mohamedans of Larut; and the tree which overshadows it has I am glad to say been spared the fate which awaited the rest of the jungle which overhung the road. No coolie was bold enough to put an axe to it.

W. E. M.

[The tracing, which it is found impossible to print here, is in the Society's possession, and can be seen at the Raffles Library by any one interested in the subject.]

MALAY-ENGLISH DICTIONARIES.

It does not speak well for either the enterprise or the Scholarship of English dwellers in this part of the world, that the best Malay and English dictionary which we possess is more than two thirds of a century old. Since the publication of Marsden's work there have indeed been issued several Malay Vocabularies, besides the more ambitious and voluminous work of Craufurd. But only the scantiest of these vocabularies has attempted to print the Malay words in the Arabic characters, in which alone the educated Malay is accustomed to read his own language. Even Marsden is sparing of his Arabic type, and foregoes the use of it in most of his numerous quotations from Malay authors. Under these circumstances, and having regard to the attainment of Malay as it is expected from many of the Civil Servants in this Colony, we cannot wonder that the supply of copies of Favre's Malay-French Dictionary sent out to the Straits